OCCULT CHRONOLOGY

JAMES ARTHER

ADYAR

Occult Chronology

by

James Arther

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
1.	THE GEOLOGICAL ERAS . . .	5
2.	THE HUMAN RACES . . .	18
	The First and Second Race . .	20
	The Third Race	22
	The Fourth Race	26
	The Fifth Race	27
	A Digression	28
	The Future	31
	The Sixth and Seventh Races .	34
3.	THE DESCENT OF THE ROOTBASE OF THE HIERARCHY . . .	36
4.	KALI-YUGA—Iron Age . . .	48
	The " Real Yuga " Theory . .	48
	The " New Cycle " Theory . .	49
	Transition Century	50
	The Terror	51
	Sun, Moon and Jupiter . . .	52
	3102 B.C.—A.D. 1898 . . .	54
	Asuramaya	60
	The Death-blow to Materialism .	61
	Universal Brotherhood . . .	62

NOTE

This reprint of a series of articles from *The Theosophist* of August, September, October and November 1941, and November 1940, was originally meant for a " Supplement " to the new edition of A. Besant's *The Pedigree of Man.* But because of its containing some controversial matter it was after all thought better to have it appear separately.

OCCULT CHRONOLOGY

1. THE GEOLOGICAL ERAS

OCCULT chronology is a tricky thing to deal with, especially in connection with scientific chronology. Like a steel spring or a piece of rubber, it may easily be stretched or compressed. But when stressed too far either way, it is apt suddenly to jump out of our control, leaving nothing but thin air for our hands to grasp. The reason is, of course, that we know yet so little of it, only a few of the largest milestones, with enormous gaps in between, and faint hints where others might be.

In H. P. B.'s time there was an enormous gulf gaping between "the chronology of the Secret Doctrine" (II 450) and the figures of science, seemingly unbridgeable. But time is a master-builder, and since last century the progress science has made, expanding half a million times the four thousand years allotted to the Earth's creation by the Biblical time-table, has been very satisfying for the occult chronologer.

A notable attempt to bring the ancient occult and the modern scientific figures in alignment was made by Miss E. W. Preston, M.Sc., in her book

The Earth and Its Cycles, which appeared in 1931. Her work has perhaps not received the recognition it deserves. But it has two shortcomings from the Theosophist's point of view. First—some of the "alignment" has been obtained at the cost of, or by suppressing the occult figures in favour of the scientific data. Second—where the older teachings (*The Secret Doctrine*) differ from the younger (*Man: Whence, How and Whither*), the book "sides" with the latter, and ignores the former. Examples of these shortcomings will be cited in the course of this paper.

The basis of our chronology and the starting-point of all our calculations must necessarily be the two great time-tables, found in *The Secret Doctrine*. These, combined with a third table in H. G. Wells' *The Science of Life*, make up the following time-schedule of the geological eras and periods, with the place in them of the four stages in the evolution of life—mineral, vegetable, animal and human (Table I).

Columns 1 and 4-5 are from Wells' book (1931, p. 198), columns 2-3 and 6-7 from SD[1] II 710, and columns 8-9 from SD[1] II 312. Column 10 is added to show the continuous flow of time from 320 million B.C. up to the present day. All the figures indicate millions of years, and have been generally rounded off.

The Laurentian Period is not mentioned in Wells' table. It consists of the oldest schists and

granitoid rocks in the Precambrian or Archæan Era, the younger part of which is also called the Proterozoic, and the oldest, the Archaeozoic. For the sake of fixing a definite time-limit for this period, I have added an entirely speculative 150 million years to Wells' figures (top of column 4).

H. P. B. does not give any figures for the periods (column 6), only totals for the eras (column 7). These have therefore been subdivided in proportion to the scientific figures for the periods.

A comparison of the occult with the scientific data shows that the latter are far in excess of the former, in fact twice as large, generally speaking. I cannot attempt to reconcile the two. I have only the suggestion to offer that science somehow or other has entangled itself with and is therefore embracing in her figures some previous Round or Rounds. The occult figures, as we shall see hereafter, are concerned only with our present Fourth Round. We shall recur to this problem of Rounds later.

It is here the place to give an example of the first shortcoming of *The Earth and Its Cycles* noted above. Miss Preston seems to think that the names given by H. P. B. in *The Secret Doctrine* or by the Masters in *The Mahatma Letters* to the Eras and Periods, have no significance at all; that, for example, when H. P. B. assigns the beginning of the Primary Era and the Devonian Period to 150 million years ago, she does not really mean the "old red

Eras		Periods	Figures in Science	
Modern Names	Old Names of H.P.B.'s Time		Periods	Eras
1	2	3	4	5
Archæan	Primordial	Laurentian	150	300
Palæozoic	Primordial	Cambrian	124	
Palæozoic	Primordial	Silurian	26	
Palæozoic	Primary	Devonian	70	175
Palæozoic	Primary	Carbon	77	
Palæozoic	Primary	Peemian	28	
Mesozoic	Secondary	Triassic	48	125
Mesozoic	Secondary	Jurassic	24	
Mesozoic	Secondary	Cretaceous	53	
Cenozoic	Tertiary	Eocene	20	50
Cenozoic	Tertiary	Miocene	20	
Cenozoic	Tertiary	Pliocene	10	
Cenozoic	Quaternary	Pleistocene	½	½
		Totals	650½	650½

Million Years		State of the Earth	Stages of the Evolution of Life	Time B.C.
Occultism				
Periods 6	Eras 7	8	9	10
				— 320
76		Translucid	Mineral	
				— 244
64	171	Opaque	Vegetable	— 210
				— 180
31		Throes of Adolescence	Animal	
				— 149
41				— 120
				— 108
46	103			— 62
16			Human	— 46
16				— 30
8	42½			— 22
18½				— 18
				— 31
1¼				— 2¼
1¼	3		Sexual Man	— 1
½				— 1
½	½	Periodical convulsions ; cool, hard and settled		
320	320			

sandstone," but the " Rhaetic, Keuper, Muschelkalk and Bunter " formations of the Triassic Period and the Secondary Era. This is of course unacceptable. As if the Masters, speaking on their own account or through their mouthpiece, H. P. B., did not know what kinds of material things they were really talking about as if they were uttering hollow sounds! Their " dates and names are quite out of agreement with modern thought," we are told by the author (p. 50). That is very unfortunate for modern thought, but it may leave us quite serene. At all events, the rejection by science of the occult data justifies least of all the submission of the latter to a procrustean treatment to suit the former, but rather the reverse.

To give a concrete example of such a treatment, in the table on page 43 of her book, Miss Preston lets it appear as if the " occult statements " make allowance for the " first sedimentary rocks " to reach back to 600 million B. C., in conformity with the scientific figures. H. P. B. however is emphatic that " in the Esoteric doctrine sedimentation began in *this* [fourth] *Round* approximately over 320 million years ago " (SD[1] II 715).

This figure, 320 or 300 and odd million years, is the first of those great milestones referred to in the opening paragraph of this paper. Again and again H. P. B. recurs to it: SD[1] II 52, 66, 68, 149, 251, 308, 312, 710, 712, 715. It apparently marks the beginning of this our Fourth Round. It is up to

that very beginning that the materialization, solidification, sedimentation, crystallization, or stratification—all terms used by H. P. B.; we shall meet each in turn—of the Earth's crust reaches back. Says H. P. B.: " Humanity has existed upon it [the Earth] for the last 18 million [and odd] years. This period was preceded by 300 million years of the mineral and vegetable [and animal] development " (SD[1] II 149).

This epoch of 320 million years is subdivided by the occult commentaries as follows: " During the first seven crores (70 million years) of the Kalpa the Earth and its two Kingdoms (mineral and vegetable), one already having achieved its seventh circle [cycle ?] the other, hardly nascent, are luminous and semi-ethereal, cold, lifeless, and translucid. In the eleventh crore [110 million] the mother (Earth) grows opaque, and in the fourteenth [140 million] the throes of adolescence take place. These convulsions of nature (geological changes) last till her twentieth crore of years [200 million], uninterruptedly, after which they become periodical, and at long intervals. The last change took place nearly twelve crores of years ago (120 million). But the Earth with everything on her face had become cool, hard and settled ages earlier " (SD[1] II 312).

It is on the strength of the last sentence—that the Earth had become " cool, hard and settled *ages earlier* " than 120 million years ago—and also

because of the assertion immediately following—that " even before that time the Earth was ready to receive her human stock " (SD[1] II 315)—that I have divided the epoch from the 14th to the 20th crore into two, and drawn the second half into the human evolution, bringing this therefore 30 million years further back, from 120 million to 150 million B. C., as shown in column 9 of our Table.

We are assured by H. P. B. that the totals for the geological eras shown in column 7, and derived by her from the scientific figures of her time, " harmonize with the statements of Esoteric Ethnology in almost every particular " (SD[1] II 710). It is only with regard to the relatively small figures for the Quaternary and Tertiary Eras that she notes their being " probably in excess." It is therefore misleading when it is said in *The Earth etc.*, (p. 50), speaking of all her figures indiscriminately, that " H. P. B. says herself that they are too long." On the contrary, she definitely asserts the correctness of all the figures amounting to 311 million years, and only allows an excess for the comparatively insignificant figures of the last 9 million years of the Tertiary and Quaternary Eras. Let us see if we can find out how much that excess is.

In one place H. P. B. tells us that " the last of the lands of Lemuria perished about 700,000 years before the beginning of the Tertiary Period " (SD[1] II 433),[1] which according to her unrevised figure

[1] See also ML 151.

would be 9,700,000 B.C. I assume that the last land of Lemuria will not have perished much before or after the last sub-race of the Third Race had run its course, so that, roughly speaking, we may take the end of the Continent and of the Race as coinciding. In another place she writes that "the third Earth went down into the lower Deep (the Ocean) 4,242,352 years ago" (SD[1] I 439). If we deduct 700,000 years from this last figure, the remainder, 3,242,352 years, will represent the lifetime of the Quaternary and Tertiary Eras together. This 3½, instead of 9 millions, seems indeed a rather drastic reduction. I would not have thought that the words "probably in excess" could ever mean an excess of nearly two-thirds. However, we have to stick to H. P. B.'s figures. They are the only things we are sure of in occult chronology. Dividing these 3½ million years between the four periods involved, from the Eocene to the Pleistocene, in the same proportion as the scientific figures, and assigning to the Pleistocene the ½ million years of science, will give us the revised figures as shown in columns 6-7 of our Table I. The remaining 5½ million in excess I have added to the preceding era, thereby bringing its total from 37 to 42½ million, also divided proportionately over the periods.

There is another date given by H. P. B. which broadly confirms these revised estimates. "The Secret Doctrine," we are told, "assigns from 4 to 5 million years between the incipient and the final

evolution of the Fourth Root Race, on the Lemuro-Atlantean Continents" (SD[1] II 10). The last remnant of Atlantis, Poseidonis, was destroyed in very recent times, only 9,564 B.C.[1] We may accept this date also as roughly marking the end of the Fourth Race. The 5 millions (to take the highest estimate) of its lifetime would therefore not reach into the Secondary Era or into the Lemurian Race if we followed H.P.B.'s unrevised figures, but according to the revised estimates they would be respectively $1\frac{1}{2}$ million within the lower boundary of the Secondary Era, and $\frac{3}{4}$ million within the limits of the Third Race and Continent. Says H.P.B.: "This [Secondary Era] is the age of the Third Race, in which the origin of the early Fourth may be perhaps also discoverable. We are, however, here left entirely to conjecture as no definite data are yet given out by the Initiates" (SD[1] II 713). The above revised figures however make the "perhaps" into a certainty, and the "conjecture" into a fact. That may be counted a fortunate result indeed.

We must now turn to the problem of the Rounds, and the relation of our figures to these evolutionary cycles. In these later years we have come definitely to identify the Hindu cycle known as a Manvantara, of about 310 million years, with what Theosophy calls a Round.[2] And I think in a general way this assumption—for it is only

[1] ML 151.

[2] See *The Earth*, p. 19 ff.

that; there is no recognized occult authority for it in our literature—may be more or less correct. Still, in some ways our later conceptions regarding the Rounds must be somewhat modified.

For example, it is generally accepted that our present Fourth Round has only run a little more than half its course, so that from the beginning of this Round up to the present moment some 160 million years have passed. Yet, as we have seen, H.P.B. definitely says that "in the Esoteric Doctrine sedimentation began in *this Round*[1] approximately over 320 million years ago" (SD[1] II 715). Again, this "process of materialization or crystallization took place *at the beginning of the Fourth Round*[2] and reached its maximum after the appearance of man" (SD[1] II 68). Now, if indeed the beginning of our Round was 320 million years ago, then it would appear as if the whole Fourth Round, according to our later conceptions, were already finished. Or does H. P. B. call a Round something else than we at present do?

Each Round in our later conception is followed by a Dissolution Period (Pralaya) of equal duration, and it is as if H. P. B. starts our Fourth Round from a point situated halfway in what we are wont now to call the Dissolution Period of the previous Third Round. This difference in counting Rounds

[1] Her own italics.

[2] My italics.

between *The Secret Doctrine* and our later literature is shown in our Table II.

TABLE II

Earlier Teaching	Pralayas and Manvantaras	Later Teachings
	Second half Dissolution	
First Round	First Evolution	
	First half Dissolution	First Round
	Second half Dissolution	
Second Round	Second Evolution	
	First half Dissolution	Second Round
	Second half Dissolution	
Third Round	Third Evolution	
	First half Dissolution	Third Round
	Second half Dissolution	
Fourth Round	Fourth Evolution	
	First half Dissolution	Fourth Round
	Second half Dissolution	

Undoubtedly H. P. B.'s method of counting these Rounds is more logical. And probably more in conformity also with Hindu teachings which, for example, let every Evolutionary Period both be preceded and followed by a Twilight (SD[1] II 308).

An Evolutionary Period is a time of outgoing energy in the first half of its cycle, when it follows the Pravritti Marga. In its second half the energy

returns or turns inward again (Nivritti Marga). With the Dissolution it is just the other way round. Its first half is as it were a continuation, a further deepening of the inturning movement, while its second half is the re-awakening to the outward call, continued, strengthened, and brought to its highest pitch in the first half of the next Evolution. From this re-awakening (second half Dissolution) to the turning inward (second half Evolution) is therefore logically the real complete Outgoing Way, while the other half, from the second half Evolution to the second half Dissolution, is the real complete Inturning Way. And these two together, from re-awakening to reawakening, or from the second half Dissolution to the next second half Dissolution, form one complete Round.

That there may not be any misunderstanding as it were concerning the starting-point of the Fourth Round, H. P. B. further remarks: "With regard to the 320 million of years assigned to sedimentation, it must be noted that even a greater time elapsed during the preparation of this globe for the Fourth Round *previous to stratification*" (SD[1] II 715).[1] By this preparation of even a longer duration, must be understood the three Evolutions and 2½ or 3 Dissolutions previous to the Fourth Round, and embracing a period of six times 310 million or 1860 million years, just about the age of the Earth, recognized by modern science.

[1] H.P.B.'s italics.

When therefore the figures of science for the duration of the geological periods assign an age from 600 to 650 million years to the oldest rocks in the crust of the Earth, there is no doubt that they are embracing, according to H.P.B.'s counting, pre-Fourth-Round times up to half-way the previous third Evolution. The explanation of this confusion is that in the Fourth Round only the real physical materialization of the Earth's strata began, but that their organization and differentiation into the various kinds of rocks and minerals started, of course, from the beginning in the First Round, when matter was still in subtler, etheric, super-etheric, and perhaps astral, states, and only gradually condensed, becoming what matter is now.[1]

2. THE HUMAN RACES

Having in the previous part established the time-table of the Geological Eras as well as given the rough outlines of the place of human evolution in that time-scheme, our next concern will be to work out the details of the latter, giving for each of the Human Races separately the times of its beginning and end so far as known, or as may be more or less safely conjectured. Our starting-point will be roughly 150 million years B. C., that is, *half-way* up to the beginning of our Fourth Round, according to H. P. B.'s method of calculating, or right up to the

[1] Cf. SD[1] II 68, 157, 712-3.

beginning of our Fourth Round, according to our later way of counting the Rounds (see Table II). The following Table will make this clear :

TABLE III

310 million B.C. ...	2nd half previous Dissolution	Total 4th Round 620 million years
155 million B.C. ...	1st half 4th Evolution	
O.O.O. ...	2nd half 4th Evolution	
155 million A.D. ...	1st half next Dissolution	

This also shows that we have still in another respect to revise our ideas about Rounds. When speaking of a Round, we are apt to imagine that no activity on a certain planet, say the Earth, happens before the life-wave, circling around the string of seven globes constituting a Planetary Chain, and visiting these globes *one after the other*, arrives at that particular planet. In the case of our Earth, the middle planet of the string, that would be about the middle of the Round, or near to the point in the above Table, marked o. o. o. But from H.P.B.'s figures we see that the activity, even of the human evolution, starts from the very beginning of the fourth manvantara, or what we in later parlance call the beginning of our Round. I take it therefore that the reawakening to activity does not start on one globe after another successively, but simultaneously on all, radiating out as it were from the centre to all the seven globes at the same time, or nearly so. Yet, I also think that the conception of the successive development

is not altogether to be discarded. Only it is restricted to the middle stage, when the evolution on each globe is brought to maturity and perfection or to its full fruition. This happens indeed, I think, successively, as the Planetary Logos fixes His full attention on one planet after the other. And that crucial point in the history of the Earth in this Round was reached some 20 or 18 million years ago. We shall recur to this important event later.

In the following Table the beginnings and ends of the seven Races of humanity are listed exclusively according to the chronological data of *The Mahatma Letters* and *The Secret Doctrine*, without taking into consideration any scientific figures, widely divergent as these are from the occult.

The First and Second Races

"The Occult doctrine jealously guards its real and correct figures as far as concerns the First, Second, and two-thirds of the Third Root-Race" (SD[1] II 693). This does not sound hopeful. However, in spite of this reticence, hints are thrown out here and there. The difficulty is only to hunt them out. Here is one: "The actual chronology of the First, Second and Early Third Races are closely veiled by the Initiates." All right! But H.P.B. goes on to say: "The First Root-Race may have been Pre-Secondary, as is indeed taught" (SD[1] II 715). It is at any rate something, to learn that the First Race is older than the last 46 million years, and that

TABLE IV

Races and Sub-races	B. C.	Geological Period	Lifetime of the Races	Total Lifetime 7 Races
Beginning 1-2 Race	150 million	Devonian	125 million	150 million
Beginning 3 Race, 1-3 sub-race	30 million	Jurassic		
Beginning 3 Race, 4 sub-race 1 half	—	—		
Beginning 3 Race, 4 sub-race 2 half	18 million	Cretaceous		
Beginning 3 Race, 5 sub-race	—	—		
Beginning 4 Race	5 million	Cretaceous	$25\frac{3}{4}$ million	
Beginning 3 Race, 6 sub-race	—	—		
Beginning 3 Race, 7 sub-race	—	—		
End 3 Race, Lemuria destroyed	$4\frac{1}{4}$ million	Cretaceous		
Highest point of 4 Race, first sinking of Atlantis	$3\frac{1}{2}$ million	Eocene	5 million	
Main sinking of Atlantis	2 million	Miocene		
Beginning 5 Race	1 million	Pliocene		
Sinking of Ruta and Daitya	850,000	Pliocene		
End 4 Race	9,564	Pleistocene	$1\frac{1}{2}$ million	
Beginning 5 Race, 6 sub-race	2,500 A.D.	—		
Beginning 6 Race				
Beginning 5 Race, 7 sub-race	210,000 A.D.	—	300,000	
End 5 Race	425,000 A.D.	—		
Beginning 7 Race	500,000 A.D.	—	60,000	
End 6 Race	510,000 A.D.	—		
End 7 Race	560,000 A.D.	—		

it is at least of the Primary and may be even of the Primordial Age, for all we know. " For the last 120 millions of years, even before that time, the Earth was ready to receive her human stock. The actual duration of the first two and a half Races is withheld from all but the higher Initiates " (SD[1] II 312). Again this discouraging secrecy, and yet in the same breath as it were, namely, in the immediately preceding sentence, the truth is let out. For we may be sure, that when the Earth was " ready " to receive its human stock, Nature will not have waited a moment to make use of it. In that sense there is no waste, either of matter, space or time, in Nature. I take it therefore that the First Race started " 120 millions of years ago, and even before that time," so let us say, to take a round figure, 150 million years ago, that is, in the Devonian, nay, it may even be in the Silurian Period. We may therefore just say, as " the Secondary Age is the age of the Third Race " (SD[1] II 713), and the Tertiary of the Fourth, so is the Primary Era *the* age of the First and Second Races, while the Quaternary embraces the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Races.

The Third Race

" The Third Race goes very far back into the Secondary Age " (SD[1] II 710). We are not told how far, but to account for " very far back," two-thirds, or somewhat less, does not seem too much. That

would bring us to about 30 million years B.C., or to the beginning of the Jurassic Period.

" The *middle* [that is, the second half of the fourth sub-race of the] Third Race began to evolve into separate males and females " (SD[1] II 198). " By the end of the fifth [sub-race of the Third Race] mankind was born under the same identical process as our historical generations " (SD[1] II 197). That is to say, in the fifth sub-race the separation of the sexes, *begun* in the fourth, was *completed*. It is in that sense also that the following passage must be understood: " It is during its [the Third Race's] fifth sub-race that mankind [finally or completely] separated sexually, and that the *first man was born* according to the now normal process " (SD[1] II 715).

" The figures 18 millions of years embrace the duration of sexual physical man " (SD[1] II 157). We are not directly told if these 18 million years refer to the beginning (fourth sub-race) or to the completion (fifth sub-race) of the separation into different sexes. I have accepted the first alternative as the most probable, and approaching nearest to the figures in *Man: Whence, How and Whither* (1st Ed., p. 96): " These [sexual] changes began some 16½ million years ago, and occupied some 5½ to 6 million years."

As regards the length of time it took for the separation of the sexes to be fully developed, there are no figures in *The Secret Doctrine* to confirm or contradict directly those just quoted from *Man*.

But we may get some approach to the truth if we accept the following conjecture, which in my opinion seems reasonable, and even unavoidable. I believe, namely, that the seeds for the new Fourth Race, which was to be born from the Third Race, were not taken from one of the latter's sub-races that were still in an unstable mode of transition as regards its sexual state, and I also believe that Nature will not have lost much time in starting the Fourth Race once the separation of the sexes was a universally established fact. I hold therefore that the beginnings of the Fourth Race do not reach back much farther than the fifth or sixth sub-race. The rule of the later teaching that every successive Race is developed from the corresponding sub-race of the preceding Race sounds to me too exact and too exacting. Nature, particularly so-called animated Nature shows a remarkable freedom and ability to leave the beaten track, and to disregard in one way or another the prescribed rule. I have worked the above conjucture into our Table IV. On the strength of it we are able to say that the separation of the sexes occupied some 13 million years, instead of $6\frac{1}{2}$, reaching its completion 5 million years ago, instead of 10. If the last figure taken from *Man* were correct, it would mean that Nature has waited five million years after the full completion of the separation of the sexes, before starting the Fourth Race. This I cannot believe. The Third Race would at such a late date be definitely on its

downward path, heading for the end. Whereas if the seeds for the Fourth Root-Race had been taken immediately after the complete separation of the sexes, that is to say, after the Third Race had reached its full maturity, that must be called the reasonable act of a good and wise breeder and husbandman. And we may be sure that there is no better breeder and wiser husbandman than Nature.

It seems here also the place to give an example of my second objection to *The Earth and Its Cycles*, mentioned in the opening paragraphs of the first chapter, that is, its ignoring of the chronology of *The Secret Doctrine*, and its following only of the *Man* chronology. I quote from p. 67, and add between brackets what *The Secret Doctrine* teaches differently: "The Third Root-Race, the Lemurian, began 18 [read: 30] million B.C. The separation of the sexes began in the early [read: middle, or fourth sub-race of the] Third Race [18 million years ago], and occupied $6\frac{1}{2}$ [read: 13] million years, culminating about 10 [read: 5] million years ago in the third [read: fifth] Lemurian sub-race."[1]

The most important figure in the life-story of the Third Race, in fact the turning-point of its career, in one sense its "Fall," in another its "Salvation," at least a decisive step forward in its evolution, is the date 18 million B.C. This date is of fundamental importance in *The Secret Doctrine*, as is shown by its being again and again referred to by H. P. B. I

[1] See also SD[1] I 439, II 433.

give here the probably full list of its recurrence in her book; I, 609; II, 9, 46, 68, 69, 72, 73, 148, 149, 156, 157, 250, 251, 261, 307, 308, 310, 312, 796. The 18 millions are only a rough approximation. Hindu chronology is nothing if not minutely exact, and has computed the birth-year of sexual man at 18,616,841 B.C. (SD[1] II 69, 251). For simplicity's sake however we shall keep to H.P.B.'s round figure.

The Fourth Race

Of the Fourth Race, I have only to add to the previous data establishing its beginning and end, the figures for the successive stages in the destruction of its great Continent. "Lemuria had perished [4¼ million B.C.] before Atlantis had fully developed" (SD[1] II 8). "In the Eocene Age [3½ million B.C.)—even in its 'very first part'—the great cycle of the Fourth Race men had already reached its highest point, and the great continent showed the first symptoms of sinking" (ML 151). Atlantis belongs "to the Miocene times" (ML 154), and its main sinking "began during the Miocene period" (ML 155). "The main Atlantis perished several [say 2] million years ago during the Miocene period" (SD[1] II 314). "The Ruta and Daitya Island-Continents perished some 850,000 years ago, toward the close of the Miocene age" (SD[1] II 433). But elsewhere H.P.B. says: "The destruction of the famous island of *Ruta* and the smaller one *Daitya* occurred 850,000 years ago in the later Pliocene times"

(SD[1] II 314). This agrees better with our first Table. But our figures for the Geological Periods being only rough approximations in half and quarter millions, we may accept either of the two statements without difficulty.

The Fifth Race

Of our own Fifth Race H.P.B. tells us that "the first of these, the Aryan Asiatics, witnessed the doom of the last of the populations of the giant Atlanteans, 850,000 years ago" (SD[1] II 433). If we suppose that those first Aryans were then already in existence, say for some 150,000 years, their first beginnings must be dated one million years ago. Another calculation gives the same result. Every sub-race is in its turn subdivided into seven "family-races," each of which lives "approximately from 25 to 30,000 years" (SD[1] II 433). Each family-race is again subdivided and re-subdivided into countless branches, shoots, offshoots, smaller and larger nations, tribes, clans, etc. (SD[1] II 434). From the beginning of the Fifth Root-Race up to the present fifth family-race of the fifth sub-race, gives a total of 33 family-races. This multiplied by 30,000 years for each family-race gives again about one million years.[1]

[1] If we have to allow for overlappings, the average age of one family-race would be still greater than 30,000 years. Neither has there been taken into account any decreasing in the age of each successive family-race. The figure 30,000 must therefore indeed be accepted as a very rough "average" only, still the best we have.

A Digression

This affords an interesting side-view on the previous and the present world-war, as well as on future similar, larger and smaller, local or global wars, by each of which an old order has to pass away and a new order is trying to assert itself, when an old " family-race " or shoot or tribe has to cede its dominating place to a rising, younger branch, " family-race," sub-race, or Race. I see the present world-war as just one phase in such a struggle for supremacy between the older branch of the fifth family-race (the present Anglo-Saxons) and a younger branch (the present Germans). In the future a similar death-struggle the beginnings of which are already visible now, will have to be fought out between that younger branch and a still younger one (the Slavs or present Russians). Older branches preceding the present Anglo-Saxons I see in the Norsemen or Danes, including the Normans, physically and culturally overcome and absorbed by the Anglo-Saxons, further in various of the still older branches of the Germanic or Teutonic peoples, like the Goths, Franks, Vandals, Alemanni, etc.

The younger race must naturally win, either physically or culturally, or both. Else it would not properly fulfil its destiny, which is that each race in its turn shall lead a particular stage in the world-evolution. But many wars, not one or two only, may have to be fought, before the younger can overcome the natural resistance of the older against its

supersession. Therefore do not read in the above remarks an easy prophecy that the Germans will win the present war. I do not aspire after the role of a prophet or a seer, but only after that of a student.

[The above was written a full month before the invasion of Russia by the Germans on that memorable day of June the 22nd, 1941. At that time Germany and Russia still seemed friends, the former leading triumphantly everywhere on the Continent, the latter apparently following in its wake like Italy. But how the aspect of things has changed since then! Germany cowed and on the defensive, Russia in the lead and watched by jealous eyes from everywhere. It was a revelation, the rising of this mighty world-power of the Slav people, battling its way to the front with the heart-blood of uncounted millions of its sons. I have not changed the text of my former remarks, because it illustrates what I said, that I am not a prophet but a student. With the added knowledge of the last two years—which did not come as a surprise to one man only, "the ablest, most successful, powerful and communistically souled ruler in Europe," as Bernard Shaw has recently described Stalin, and he might have added in America as well—in the light of that new knowledge now at hand, I would have formulated my deductions differently of course. I would have grouped the Anglo-Saxons and the Germans together rather as of the same great Teutonic branch of nations. The rivalry between them I would have viewed

more as that between sub-branches of one same branch, than as between different branches. The real struggle, as it is showing its true colours more and more in the development of the present war, as well as in the vague foreshadowings of hidden jealousies and rivalries that are fast growing from it, point in my opinion to a still greater struggle in the future between the older Anglo-Teutonic and the younger Slav branch of our fifth European sub-race. A struggle which, if we of the older branches could only accept and follow that "communistic soul" which is inspiring Russia in her great movement forward towards something really new, we might be able to convert from the expected third great world-war into a more peaceful and harmonious movement towards the needed change, towards the so-much wished-for new world-order.]

Of this I am sure—that the best runner eventually wins the race, but also that however many races he may win, in the end, as he grows older, he too will inevitably be out-run by a younger, stronger man, with newer ideals and fresher enthusiasms. The "best" does not mean only the physically strongest or quickest. The one great fault of the masses is that they do not know what fair play means. Instead of leaving each free to run his race as best he can, they rather seek to obstruct the other's running, or even, if they can, to wipe him out entirely from the field. Yet, there is infinite room for each and every one, for the field is the unbounded universe, and it

is only stupid mulishness that wants to walk over a man, instead of around him, in order to get to the goal. The former shows the imbecility of brute strength, the latter the sagacity of reason, man's highest talent.

To return to the age of our present Aryan Race, both *The Mahatma Letters* and *The Secret Doctrine* are most definite and exact. "The fifth race began in Asia, a million years ago." Again: "The oldest branchlet of the present *fifth* Human Race was evoluted in Central Asia more than one million years ago." [1]

I must here point to another discrepancy between the earlier and the later teachings. The latter declare that the Fifth Race was actually started 80,000 years ago, and that the 1 million B.C. refers only to a kind of "earmarking" of certain egos for the new Race.[2] But the words of the Master, quoted above, leave room but for one interpretation—that the Race was *actually living* in Central Asia at the remoter date.

The Future

Having traced man's history so far in the past, there remains the natural question, what about the future? And though I may not wish to be a prophet or a seer, still legitimately to speculate regarding the future upon the basis of the past, is a sensible pastime for a creature of reason.

[1] ML 150, 121. SD[1] II 10, 714.

[2] *Man*, pp. 110-11, 239.

Taking the 30,000 average for the lifetime of a family-race, and counting sixteen such family-races for the remainder of the Fifth Root-Race, leaves a further lifetime for it of ½ million years, bringing the total life-period of the Aryan Race up to 1½ million years.

And this fits in well with the statement that "the Aryan Race is now in its Kali Yuga, and will continue to be in it for 427,000 years longer, while various 'family-races' are in their own special cycles" (SD[1] II 147). The figure 427,000 is based on the Hindu calculation of 432,000 years for the complete period of a Kali Yuga (SD[1] II 69). The Aryan Kali Yuga "is said to have begun between the 17th and 18th February in the year 3102 B.C.," and its first sub-cycle of 5,000 years has therefore passed on the same date in the year 1898, seven years after H.P.B.'s death (SD[1] I xliv, 396, 612; II 69, 435).[1]

Most interesting are H.P.B.'s prognostications about the sub-races yet to come of our Aryan Race. "The Americans have become in only three centuries a 'primary race,' *pro tem.*, before becoming a race apart, and strongly separated from all other now existing races." As I interpret these words, the American, that is the United States American and Canadian is indeed a "race apart." They have come from the fifth sub-race, and greatly from the Anglo-Saxon branch, but they are to go a

[1] See hereafter, Chapter 4, "Kali Yuga—Iron Age".

quite "separate" way, for "they are the germs of the *sixth* sub-race, and in some few hundred years more [in Table IV I have put it at the round figure of A.D. 2500], will become most decidedly the pioneers of that [sub-] race which must succeed to the present European or fifth sub-race, [including the Russian or Slav, presumably] in all its new characteristics. After this, in about 25,000 years, they will launch into preparations for the seventh sub-race, until the Sixth Root-Race will have appeared on the stage of our Round."

There is one strong objection against the above prognostication, and that is especially against the figure of 25,000 years hence as the birth-date of the seventh sub-race. This ought to be nearer 250,000, if each family-race within each sub-race has a life of 30,000 years. In Table IV I have put it at 210,000, that is half-way towards the end of the Fifth Race.

"Throughout the whole sixth and seventh sub-races" of the Fifth Race, we are further told, "the process of preparation for the Sixth great Race must last." I have therefore in Table IV made the beginning of the Sixth Race coincident with the beginning of the sixth sub-race of the Fifth Race.

"But the *last* remnants of the Fifth Continent will not disappear, in consequence of cataclysms which must one day destroy Europe, and still later the whole Aryan Race and thus affect both Americas, until some time after the birth of the *new* Race; when another and *new* dwelling, the sixth

continent, will have appeared above the *new* waters on the face of the globe, so as to receive the new stranger. When shall this be? Who knows save the great Masters of Wisdom, perchance, and they are as silent upon the subject as the snow-capped peaks that tower above them."

No further dates, then, except in confirmation of former dates, the information that "the Fifth will overlap the Sixth Race for many hundreds of millenniums" (SD[1] II 445). The exact number of cento-millenniums is shown in Table IV to be possibly nearly $4\frac{1}{4}$.

The Sixth and Seventh Races

Our further speculations on the future are based upon the ratio of decrease in the lifetimes of the different Races, as shown by the fourth column of our Table IV. Taking the First and Second Races together, the first four races show a ratio of decrease of about 5 : 1, and from the Fourth to the Fifth the ratio is about 4 : 1. Assuming a similar ratio to hold good for the last two Races, I have allowed about 300,000 years for the life-period of the Sixth, and 60,000 for the seventh and last Race.

I do not deny that in this calculation the taking together of the First and Second Races is an inaccuracy. Still, it is the best we have to offer, the date 150 million B.C. for the beginning of the First Race being also largely problematic. And there is some reason for taking the First and

Second Races as one Race as it were. For " the First Race *never died*. Its ' men ' melted gradually away, becoming absorbed in the bodies of their own ' sweat-born ' progeny," the Second Race (SD[1] II 121). However, let it be granted and clearly understood that these final speculations are pure conjectures based on imperfect knowledge, helped out by analogy and comparison.

I have allowed 10,000 years of overlapping for the Sixth and the Seventh Root-Race, also an entirely speculative estimate of course. Still, I have the conviction that the figures in our Tables cannot be very far out. In a half-million years, the life-wave may pass on to the next planet and leave the Earth to enter her pralaya till the next awakening. We may therefore well say that we are nearing the end of this Round's humanity upon Earth. The few hundred-thousand years still before us seem negligible, compared with the 150 million years that lie behind us, only one-three-hundredth part. Still, to our limited consciousness of time and space it seems long enough, and to the wise man it must at any rate appear important enough to try to make the best of it. For it is the last step and the last effort that always count most, and may just bring the victory which without it might slip through our hands.

3. THE DESCENT OF THE ROOTBASE OF THE HIERARCHY

More than once in the previous chapters it has been said that the date of 18 or roughly 20 million years B.C. is the crucial point in the evolution of the human races. It falls in the middle of the Third Race, in its fourth sub-race therefore. This " Third-Race-mankind is the most mysterious of all the hitherto developed five Races," we are told by H.P.B. (SD[1] II 197). And its supreme mystery is the separation of the sexes. But that was only the physical apotheosis as it were of the mystery. It was preceded and accompanied by many other physical and intellectual fundamental changes in the constitution of man, which are of no less importance than the sexual transformation.

From " boneless " man became a creature " with bones," a vertebrate, which made it possible for him at last to walk erect, and to develop that sense of dignity and of the greatness of his destiny, which is his divine heritage, if only he would understand all its implications. From " sexless," through the " bi-sexual " stage, he completed his polarization, and definitely separated into the " mono-sexual " male and female species of modern times, thereby learning to know what love is, and companionship and friendship, as distinguished from egotism, hate, envy and enmity. From " mindless " he became possessed " with mind," and thereby with discrimination,

with a conscience, with the sense of morality and responsibility. From "dumb" he became endowed with "speech," and all the possibilities opened up thereby, of social intercourse with his fellow humans, of poetry, literature, culture, and civilization in the true sense of this much abused word. And all these significant radical changes, with all their incalculably far-reaching consequences, were concomitants and corollaries of that central act of polarization, the physical separation of the sexes, which was started in the middle of the Third Race, some 18 or 20 million years ago.

It will be readily understood that, if there is in fact an Inner Government of the world, it must have put out a special effort to guide these fateful changes in the right direction, in the right places, and at the right times. And so we hear indeed of the Descent upon Earth of that "Wondrous Being" who is the "Rootbase of the Hierarchy," "the *Tree* from which in subsequent ages all the great *historically* known Sages and Hierophants have branched off," known by many names—as "*the* Initiator," the "Great Sacrifice," the "Solitary Watcher," the "Great Teacher" of "all the other less divine teachers and instructors of mankind."[1] And it is "in the first or earlier portion of the existence of this Third Race, while it was yet in its state of purity," that is, before its "Fall" and separation into

[1] SD[1] I 207-8.

different sexes, that this great Advent took place. The " first or earlier portion " of the Third Race embraces its first three and a half sub-races.

To understand the meaning of the " Fall " of the Third Race, when they lost their purity, we must take a bird's-eye view of the previous stages of development. These we may describe as :

I. entirely *sexless*, First Race ;

II. still *a-sexual*, but showing a potential, a first germ of awakening sexuality, Second Race ;

III. *bi-sexual*, both sexes present in the same individual, first $3\frac{1}{2}$ sub-races of the Third Race ;

IV. *mono-sexual*, the two sexes divided over different individuals, later sub-races and races.

Say the *Stanzas of Dzyan* : " The a-sexual Second Race was the product by budding and expansion from the sexless shadow " [the First Race] (SD[1] II 116).

Add the *Commentaries* : " First come the SELF-EXISTENT on this Earth. They are the ' Spiritual Lives ' projected by the absolute WILL and LAW, at the dawn of every rebirth of the worlds. These LIVES are the divine seed-Manus, or the Progenitors and Fathers.

" From these proceed—

" 1. The First Race, the ' Self-born ' which are the (astral) shadows of their Progenitors. The body was devoid of all understanding (mind, intelligence, and will). The inner being (the higher Self or Monad), though within the earthly frame, was

unconnected with it. The link, the Mind, was not there as yet.

"2. From the First (Race) emanated the Second, called the 'Sweat-born' and the 'Boneless.' This is the Second Root-Race, endowed by the preservers and the incarnating gods with the first primitive and weak spark [the germ of intelligence]. And from these in turn proceeds:

"3. The Third Root-Race, the 'Two-fold' (Androgynes). The first [sub-] Races hereof are shells, till the last [sub-race] is 'inhabited' (*i.e.* informed) by the Intelligencies" (SD[1] II 164-5).

Says H.P.B.: "The sexless [First] Race reincarnated in the (potentially) bisexual [or a-sexual Second Race]; the latter in the Androgynes [of the first $3\frac{1}{2}$ sub-races of the Third Race]; these again in the [mono-]sexual, the later, Third Race" (SD[1] II 2-3).

"That Third and holy Race [holy, because not yet 'fallen' into different sexes] consisted of men who, at their zenith, were described as 'towering giants of godly strength and beauty, and the depositaries of all the mysteries of Heaven and Earth.' The days of their physiological purity [*i.e.* before the Fall], and those of their so-called Fall, have equally survived in the hearts and memories of their descendants" (SD[1] II 171-72).

How did these earlier Lemurians of the first $3\frac{1}{2}$ sub-races become the "depositaries of all the mysteries," and the "Kings and instructors of the Third

Race in arts and sciences, compared with which our little modern science stands less chance than elementary arithmetic with geometry" (SD[1] II 194)? With the answer to this question we return to that with which we started, the foundation of the spiritual Hierarchy upon the Earth.

"At first it was a Wondrous Being, called the 'Initiator,' and after him a group of semi-divine and semi-human beings. '*Set apart*' in Archaic *genesis* for certain purposes, they are those in whom are said to have incarnated the highest Intelligencies, Wise Men and Sages from previous Manvantaras' —*to form the nursery for future human adepts*, on this Earth and during this cycle" (SD[1] I 207).

And the descent of this Wondrous Being having taken place "in the early part of the Third Age, before the separation of the sexes of the Third Race," must therefore have occurred more than 18 million years ago. Now in the earlier days Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater still kept to this figure as the foundation date of the Occult Hierarchy on this Earth.

A.B. in 1903: "The nucleus of the first great White Lodge upon earth—from that day, more than 18 million years ago, until now—has never ceased to function" (*The Pedigree of Man*, 1943, p. 141).

C. W. L. in 1910: "The great Head of this Hierarchy, in whose hands is the fate of the continents, in whose name all initiations are given, is one of

the very few now remaining upon earth of the Lords of the Flame, the Children of the Fire-Mist, the great beings who came down from Venus nearly [*sic*] 18 million years ago to help and lead the evolution of humanity on our chain" (*The Inner Life*, I 9).

But in 1913 this was changed. In *Man*, etc. (p. 102) "the coming of the Lords of the Flame" from Venus is said to have taken place "about 6½ million years ago." How to explain this discrepancy from H.P.B.'s figure? I have only one suggestion to offer. That *The Secret Doctrine* with its 18½ million, and *Man* with its 6½ million years are describing two different events, two "descents" in fact, related but not identical. I am led to this solution by H. P. B.'s telling us that there were indeed two such hierarchical "efforts."

Speaking of "the first and holy Son of Magic Power," she says that he "had his body gnawed by the tooth of time, but the roots of his inner being remained for ever undecaying and strong, because they grew and expanded in heaven, not on earth. He was *the first of the First*,[1] and he was the seed of all the others. There were other "Sons of Magic Power' produced by *a second Spiritual effort*,[1] but the first one has remained to this day the Seed of divine Knowledge, the One and the Supreme among the terrestrial 'Sons of Wisdom'" (SD[1] I 211).

[1] My italics.

I am further strengthened in this conjecture by what C.W.L. tells us about there being "three successive Lords of the World" for every globe, and that "the present holder of the office [on the Earth] is already the third" (*The Masters and the Path*, 1940, p. 332).

I believe, then, that the magnificent description given by Annie Besant in *Man* of the descent upon Earth of the Lords of the Flame from Venus, 6½ million years ago, refers to the third World-Lord, while the "descent" of 18 and odd million years ago, recorded by H. P. B., concerns the Second World-Lord. As to the First World-Lord, that must have been the exalted Being who directed the evolution of the first two and a half Races of mankind antecedent to 18 million B.C., for we cannot assume that these would have been left without guidance altogether, during the 130 millions of years, before the Advent of the Second World-Lord.

But this First World-Lord and His Hierarchy belonged to a class entirely different from the later Hierarchy. The latter being, as we have heard, especially intended "to form the nursery for future human adepts," the former had no such purpose, as in the young days of the human races it could not yet hope for recruits to their ranks from the primitive human stock. Their quite different task, namely, to set the new races going in the right direction is thus described by the Master: "The *highest* Planetary Spirits appear on Earth but

at the origin of every *new* human kind; at the junction of, and close of, the two ends of the great cycle [*i.e.* the end of the previous and the beginning of the next Round]. And they remain with man no longer than the time required for the eternal truths they teach to impress themselves so forcibly upon the plastic mind of the new races as to warrant them from being lost or entirely forgotten in ages hereafter by the forthcoming generations. The mission of the planetary Spirit is but to strike the *Keynote of Truth*. Once he has directed the vibration of the latter to run its course uninterruptedly along the catenation of that race and to the end of the cycle—the denizen of the highest inhabited sphere disappears from the surface of our planet—till the following 'resurrection of flesh' [the next Round]. The vibrations of the Primitive Truth are what your [our] philosophers name 'innate ideas'" (ML 41).

Again: "At the beginning of each Round, when humanity reappears under quite different conditions than those afforded for the birth of each [succeeding] new race and its sub-races, a 'Planetary' has to mix with these primitive men, and to refresh their memories and reveal to them the truths they knew during the preceding Round. But that happens only for the benefit of the *first* Race" [read: Races]. And then the Master goes on to describe what apparently is the special task of the Second and Third Hierarchies, with their Second and Third

World-Lords or Spiritual Heads. "It is the duty of the latter [the first Race or Races of the previous sentence] to choose the fit recipients among its sons [the human stock becoming fit to contribute its own recruits to the Hierarchy], who are 'set apart' [note the same expression used by H.P.B. for the second Hierarchy] to use a Biblical phrase —as the vessel to contain the *whole stock of knowledge*, to be divided among the future races and generations until the close of that Round."

Finally, the Third World-Lord must of course also have a special task, distinct from the First and Second Hierarchy, namely, to carry over to the new Round the result of the present cycle. Says the Master: "Every race had its adepts, and with every new race, we are allowed to give them out as much of our knowledge as the men of that race deserve it. The last seventh race will have its Buddha as every one of its predecessors had; but its adepts will be far higher than any of the present race, for among them will abide the future Planetary, the spiritual Intelligence whose duty it will be to instruct or 'refresh the memory' of the first race of the fifth Round men after this *planet's* future obscuration" (ML 157). And so we see Round linked to Round, evolution to evolution.

There remains one more problem regarding these Hierarchies to be solved. Of the First Head of the Hierarchy we have heard the Master say that He was a "denizen of the highest inhabited sphere."

Of the Second Head of the Hierarchy H.P.B. told us that He " descended from a ' high region.' " But no further particulars are vouchsafed. Of the Third Head of the Hierarchy we are told that He came from Venus. This was propounded not only in *Man* but in the ten years older *Pedigree* as well. In the earlier teachings, however, either *The Mahatma Letters* or *The Secret Doctrine*, there is no straight pronouncement, directly connecting either of the three Hierarchies or their Heads with the planet Venus. But there are various indications pointing in that direction, in so far as regards either one or both of the two later Human Hierarchies, so to say, as distinguished from the " Planetary " First Hierarchy, to borrow the Master's term.

Says H.P.B.; " The third humanity [Third Race,] those who fell into generation, or from [bisexual] androgynes became separate entities, one male and the other female, are said to be under the direct influence of Venus, *the little sun* in which the solar orb stores his light ' " (SD[1] II 24). On the other hand, it is said of every Race that it is born under a special planet: the First under the Sun, the Second under Jupiter, the Third under Mars *and* Venus, the Fourth under the Moon and Saturn, the Fifth under Mercury.[1] On the same grounds we might infer that parts of the Hierarchies, or

[1] SD[1] II 29. Lohitanga is Mars and *not* Venus. The words between brackets on line 9 from the top, should therefore be read: " the ' fiery-bodied ' [Mars, *and* also under] Venus ".

"descents" or "efforts" may have come also from some of the other Planets mentioned. And who knows if this has not indeed been the case, whether every Planet has not given some contribution towards the helping of the Earth on its path! I myself find the idea perfectly reasonable and logical, even if the other chains are less far evolved, their spiritual Hierarchies are not! But it is somewhat beyond the point at issue, namely, whether one of the *Heads* of the Earthly Hierarchy came in fact from Venus.

Of stronger force are the following pronouncements from the *Commentaries* to the *Stanzas of Dzyan*: "Light comes [to the Earth] through Venus, who receives a triple supply, and gives one-third of it to the Earth. Therefore the two [the Earth and Venus] are called 'twin-sisters,' but the Spirit of the Earth is subservient to the 'Lord' of Venus. Our wise men represent the two Globes, one over, the other under the double Sign (the primeval Svastica, bereft of its four arms, or the cross+)" (SD[1] II 29). The two signs for the Earth and Venus are therefore respectively ♁ and ♀.

This highly mystical passage needs some explanation to be fully understood in all its allusions and implications.

The "triple supply" which Venus receives, and of which it gives "one-third" to the Earth, so that it keeps only two-thirds for itself, is an allusion to the well-known astronomical fact, that Venus being

nearer to the Sun than the Earth, "receives from the Sun twice as much light and heat as the Earth" (SD[1] II 29). But behind this physical fact, and the other that Venus is "far older than the Earth" (SD[1] I 155), there is hidden the spiritual fact that Venus is far in advance of the Earth in spiritual Wisdom, from the standpoint of one Round twice as far, being one full Round ahead of the Earth. And of this excess of spiritual light, like a true "twin-sister," the "occult sister and alter-ego of the Earth" (SD[1] I 305) it yields exactly half to its twin. This "half" of its Wisdom contributed to the Earth, may very well be interpreted as referring to the "descent" from Venus of the Lords of the Flame to take over the Inner Government of the Earth, whether this be the Second or the Third "effort," or both. I think the latter the most probable.

Though twins, Venus is undoubtedly the First-born, the Elder, and therefore the "Spirit of the Earth," that is, its Spiritual Hierarchy is "subservient" to the Lord of Venus, or to the Head of the Hierarchy on "the little Sun," or "the *Sol alter*, 'the other Sun'" as Venus is also called (SD[1] II 31).

Some other texts, pointing all in the same direction, may finally be here collected together: "Venus is the most occult, powerful, and mysterious of all

[1] "Twice as much" (2 : 1) is right. "Twice more" (3 : 1) on the preceding page is wrong.

the planets" (SD[1] II 30). "This planet is our Earth's *primary*, and its spiritual proto-type. Hence Venus-Lucifer's car is said to be drawn by an ogdoad of 'earth-born horses'. Every sin committed on Earth is felt by Venus. The Teacher of the Atlanteans is the Guardian Spirit of the Earth and Men. Every change on Venus is felt on, and reflected by the Earth. Venus is thus represented as the preceptor of the Atlanteans, the giants of the [Third and] Fourth Race" (SD[1] II 31).

4. KALI YUGA—IRON AGE

The "Real Yuga" Theory

Diligent students of *The Secret Doctrine* will be aware of the "additional note" appended to the first volume of the latest—Adyar—edition (p. 340), regarding the date of Kali Yuga, our present "historical" era. At the request of the Vice-President of The Society, the note was provided by Probodh Chandra Sen Gupta. The writer distinguishes between an "unreal," meaning a "false" Kali Yuga, obtained through a late "astronomical calculation backwards" by Aryabhatta (4th or 5th century A.D.), and the "real," meaning the "true" Kali Yuga according to the *Mahabharata* and *Puranas*. The former, adopted as correct by H.P.B., places the beginning of Kali Yuga at 17-18 February 3102 B.C., the latter nearly six and a half

centuries later, at 7 January 2454 B.C.[1] when the full moon at winter-solstice day stood near the star Regulus.

What I cannot gather from the note is how the pretended " true " epoch has been ascertained otherwise than, partially at least, by a similar method of " astronomical calculation backwards," based upon historical tradition as in the case of the supposed " false " epoch. I have not heard of the existence of unbroken historical records [2] for the last 5,000 years. I am therefore inclined to think that the chances for Aryabhatta's figure being more correct than any more modern calculation, are just so much greater as his time is 15 to 16 centuries nearer to the beginning of the cycle.

The " New Cycle " Theory

But what is even of greater importance for our own time, is the end of Kali Yuga, that is to say, of its first cycle of 5,000 years, which must bring with it great changes in the world of man of to-day.

Perhaps better known than Mr. Sen Gupta's theory, at least in India, and certainly most insistent, is the protest raised against it by C. Panigrahi Bharadwaz in a series of articles in *The*

[1] Another astronomer, Varahamihira († A.D. 587) dates the beginning of the Kali Yuga also at 3102 B.C., but reckons the great Bharata battle to have been fought in its 653rd year, that is 2449 B.C.

[2] See hereafter sub *Asuramaya*.

Observer,[1] not to mention a number of letters to the President and the Vice-President. The writer styles himself a " New Cycle Theosophist," and believes that " Kali Yuga ends on 1st August 1943," so that there is little time left to prepare ourselves for the impending fateful changes.[1] H.P.B. also attached the greatest importance to the closing of the first 5,000 years of Kali Yuga. Only, according to her, that closure had already taken place some 42 or 43 years ago, namely in 1897-98, six or seven years after her death.

Transition Century

It may well be however, and it seems even most likely, that the change from the old to the new cycle may not be effected in one short year, but will rather take more of a century than less to accomplish. And if that is so, this our twentieth century must be the fatal period of transition. Even when taking into consideration only the wars fought in our times, and the enormous changes effected in the ways and means of warfare, in the ways and means of dealing out death at will to hundreds of thousands of living human beings at once, it will be evident that this cannot but deeply effect all other issues of life.

Some aspects, of a more intellectual and moral nature, of the transition from the old to the new

[1] College Lane, Cuttack. The seventh and last paper of the series appeared in the issue of 1 April 1940.

[2] This was written three years before the fatal date.

cycle, were considered by me eight years ago in an article, entitled " H.P.B.'s Foresight for the Year 1897." [1] In the plight in which the world is today, it is only natural now to stress the political aspects of that transition—the relation between the nations and races. In this connection I will draw special attention to H.P.B.'s declaration that in this transition period, that is, " at the end of the dawn of the new cycle, not a few accounts will be settled and squared between the races." [2] Also to that other prophecy of hers, already cited by me at the beginning of the present war, but well worth repeating in the crisis at which we at present stand.

" The Terror "

Speaking of the Count de Saint Germain, " the greatest Oriental Adept Europe has seen during the last centuries," H.P.B. added the significant remark: " But Europe knew him not [as such in the eighteenth century]. Perchance some may recognize him at the next *Terreur*, which will affect all Europe when it comes, and not one country alone," [3] as it did France alone at the time of the Revolution. This was written shortly before her death, 1891, and could therefore—her own century being very near its close—only refer to our own twentieth century.

[1] *The Theosophist*, Dec. 1932, Jan. 1933, pp. 384, 415.

[2] See hereafter sub I.

[3] *The Theosophical Glossary*, p. 309. *The Theosophist*, Dec. 1939, p. 239.

The *Terror* is now threatening to carry everything before it. The struggle may be a long one. It may take many years and decades of years to square the karmas of nations. But the *Good* will in the end prevail, if not now then tomorrow, if not tomorrow then surely at its appointed end. With assurance we may look forward to the close of the transitionary period, when the war-ridden and power-mad old centuries will give place to a new time and a more peaceful world, because more united and federated—a change, upon the accomplishment of which may well be put the seal of the Brotherhood, when their next Messenger to the world makes his appearance in the last quarter of this our much afflicted twentieth century.[1]

Sun, Moon and Jupiter

After this digression, necessary to show the importance of our subject, let us return to Mr. Panigrahi's calculation of the year 1943 as the end of the old cycle. He bases his conclusion exclusively on one passage of *The Secret Doctrine*, with complete negation of all other texts.

And that one passage even is not from H.P.B.'s own pen, but cited by her from the *Vishnu Purana* which in its turn derives it apparently from a still older source. The problem turns therefore entirely on the latter and its interpretation. H.P.B. offers no comment of her own. The sentence runs thus :

[1] See sub VIII hereafter.

"When the sun and moon and the lunar asterism Tishya [or Pushya] and the planet Jupiter are in one mansion, [the Kali Yuga shall have an end, and] the Krita (or Satya) Age shall return." [1] Now, according to our writer such a conjunction of Sun, Moon and Jupiter in Pushya will take place 1st August 1943 at 12.44 p.m.

I have been assured by astronomer friends here that the astronomical calculation giving this exact point in time is correct.[2] Still, counting from A.D. 1943 backwards 5,000 years—the duration of the first sub-cycle of the Kali Yuga—gives B.C. 3057. And I have nowhere found any mention of this year as the astronomical or historical beginning of the Black or Iron Age.[3]

Furthermore, it is generally accepted, or at least so by H.P.B., that Kali Yuga will last 432,000 years,

[1] *SD*[1], I, 373. Fitzedward Hall's *Vishnu Purana*, IV, 229, "The chief star of Tishya is in the constellation Cancer."

[2] I am further informed by the same friends that the conjunction of Sun, Moon and Jupiter in Tishya occurs once in every 25,000 years and more. In that case, it coincides probably with a "sidereal year," that is, a complete circuit of the precession of the equinoxes, a period of about 25,868 years. For the importance of this cycle in *The Secret Doctrine*, see f. i. *SD*[1], II, 550 ff.

[3] Some derive the word Kali from *Kala* (f. *Kali*)=dark, black, dark-blue, blue-black; others from *Kali*=strife, war, dissension, contention. The two Sanskrit words are of course nearly related, having come from the same root. The name Iron Age is obtained by comparison of the Hindu Krita or Satya, Treta, Dvapara and Kali Yuga with the western tradition of the Golden, Silver, Bronze and Iron Age. Our present time seems one of the high-spots of this Dark, Iron or War-age.

of which only the first small sub-cycle of *circa* 5,000 years has passed up till now. The literal interpretation of the text therefore should lead to the conclusion that it has no bearing upon the close of the first sub-cycle, but only upon the close of the great cycle itself, lakhs of years hence.

So far for the divergent views of the " Real Yuga " and the " New Cycle " theories. Not being an astronomer myself I have no views of my own to offer regarding their merits or demerits. My task will further be to state the case of Theosophy as laid down by H.P.B., leaving it to the respective votaries of the two theories to " disprove " its truth if they feel so inclined.

3102 B.C.—A.D. 1898

Whether a real or an unreal yuga, whether false or true, there is no doubt that in *The Secret Doctrine* and in sundry other places, H.P.B. keeps doggedly to Aryabhatta's calculation of 3102 B.C. as the actual beginning of Kali Yuga. How deeply during the last seven years of her life, starting from 1884 when she began to write *The Secret Doctrine* up to her death in 1891, she was preoccupied with this cycle, and what signal importance she attached to the close of its first sub-cycle of 5,000 years, the following chronological survey [1] of relevant passages may testify.

[1] I dare not say that the list is complete, though I trust that not much may be lacking.

I. From the First Draft of "The Secret Doctrine," MS., p. 31.

"The ['very'] 'old Book' ['from which the many volumes of *Kiu-te*[1] were compiled'] having described Cosmic Evolution, and explained the origin of everything on earth including man, and given the true history of the Races, from the 1st down to the 5th Race, goes no further. It stops short at the beginning of Kali Yuga, just 4,986 years ago at the death of Krishna—the bright *Sun-god* and the once living hero and reformer.

"But there exists another book. None of its possessors regard it as very ancient as it was born with, and is only as old as, the Black Age, namely about 5,000 years ago. In about 13 to 14 years hence, the first cycle of the first five millenniums that began with the great Cycle of the *Kali Yuga* will end. And then the last prophecy contained in that Book, Volume I of the prophetic Record for the Black Age, will be accomplished. We have not long to wait and many of us will witness *the dawn of the new Cycle, at the end of which not a few*

[1] These "secret folios of Kiu-ti," thirty-five volumes of which "for exoteric purposes and the use of laymen may be found in the library of any monastery" in Tibet, are so to speak "The Popularized Version of *The Secret Doctrine*" (*SD*[4], V, 389). According to the Master, H.P.B. knew at least parts of them "by rote," (*The Mahatma Letters*, 285). Some fragments and notes from them, no doubt given out by her, and originally in the possession of A. P. Sinnett, and circulated among the older members in the early days of The Theosophical Society, were published by C. Jinarajadasa in *The Early Teachings of the Masters*, p. 184 ff. See also Francesca Arundale, *My Guest, H.P.B.*, p. 14.

accounts will be settled and squared between the races." [1]

Incidentally from this passage can be ascertained when the identical text must have been written. If we deduct 3102 from 4986 we obtain the year 1884 as the date of the written text. And if we add to this 13 or 14 years, we have the year 1897-98 as the end of the first sub-cycle of 5,000 years.

II. The above text was published in 1888 in the first edition of *The Secret Doctrine* [2] with only slight alterations, except the two notable ones which change the figure 4986 into 4989, and the numbers 13 and 14 into 9. This gives us for the date of revision of the text of the first draft the year 4989—3102=1887 (see hereafter sub V). The figure 9 is obviously a mistake and should be 10 or 11.

III. From the SD[1], *I, 369 ; SD*[4], *II, 85.*

" Yudhisthira—the first King of the *Sacea* [Shakya ?], who opens the Kali Yuga era, which has to last 432,000 years—[was] ' an actual King and man who lived 3,102 years B.C.' "

IV. From the SD[1], *I, 612 ; SD*[4], *II, 337.*

" We are at the very close of the cycle of 5,000 years of the present Aryan Kali Yuga ; and between this time [1887-88] and 1897 there will be a large rent made in the Veil of Nature, and *materialistic science will receive a death-blow.*" [3]

[1] My italics.

[2] *SD*[1], I, xliii-xliv ; *SD*[4], I, 65.

[3] My italics.

V. From the SD[1], *II, 69 ; SD*[4], *III, 79.*

" The year 1887 is from the commencement of Kali Yuga 4,989 years."

VI. From the SD[1], *II, 435 ; SD*[4], *III, 433.*

" The year of the *Kali Yuga* is said to have begun between the 17th and 18th February in the year 3102 B.C."

VII. From "Le Lotus," December 1887, p. 161.

" Ce sont les enseignements et le dogme de l'Esotérisme Oriental, qui nous montrent le *Kalki Avatar* à la fin du *Kali Yug*, alors que nous ne sommes qu'au commencement. Le *Kali Yug* doit durer 432,000 ans, et les premières 5,000 anneés ne seront écoulées qu'en 1827." The last figure is an obvious misprint for 1897.

VIII. From The Esoteric Section of The Theosophical Society, Preliminary Memorandum, 1888 (*The Theosophist*, August 1931, pp. 597-98).

" Let every member know that the time for such priceless acquisition ['to become white Adepts'] is limited. The writer of the present is old ; her life is well-nigh worn out, and she may be summoned 'home' any day and almost any hour. And if her place is even filled up, perchance by another worthier and more learned than herself [Annie Besant !], still *there remain but twelve years* to the last hour of the term—namely, till December the 31st, 1899. Those who will not have profited by the opportunity (*given to the world in every last*

quarter of a century),[1] those who will not have reached a certain point of psychic and spiritual development, or that point from which begins the cycle of adeptship, by that day—those will advance no further than the knowledge already acquired. No Master of Wisdom from the East will himself appear or send anyone to Europe or America after that period, and the sluggards will have to renounce every chance of advancement in their present incarnation—until the year 1975. Such is the LAW, for we are in Kali Yuga—the Black Age—and the restrictions in this cycle, the first 5,000 years of which will expire in 1897, are great and almost insuperable."

IX. From "Lucifer," November 1889, p. 173.

"The great psychic and spiritual change now taking place in the realm of human Soul, is quite remarkable. It began towards the very commencement of the now slowly vanishing last quarter of our century [1875], and will end—so says a mystic prophecy—either for the weal or the woe of civilized humanity, with the present cycle which will close in 1897."

X. From the "Vahan," December 1890, p. 2.

"We say today to all: If you would really help the noble cause—you must do so now: for, *a few years more and your, as well as our efforts, will be in vain.* . . We are in the very midst of the

[1] My italics. See *SD*[4], V. 396; *The Key to Theosophy*, 306; *The Mahatma Letters*, 51, 362.

Egyptian darkness of Kali Yuga, the Black Age, the first 5,000 years of which, its dreary first cycle, is preparing to close on the world between 1897 and 1898. Unless we succeed in placing the T.S. before this date on the safe side of the spiritual current, it will be swept away irretrievably into the Deep called Failures and the cold waves of oblivion will close over its doomed head. Thus will have ingloriously perished the *only* association whose aims and rules and original purposes answer in every particular and detail—if strictly carried out—to the innermost fundamental thought of every great Adept Reformer, the beautiful dream of a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAN."

XI. From one of H. P. B.'s last letters, April 15th, 1891 (*Five Messages to the American Theosophists, p. 27*).

"Let me remind you all once more that such work ['for the common cause so dear to us all'] is now more than ever needed. The period which we have now reached in the cycle that will close between 1897-98 is, and will continue to be, one of great conflict and continued strain. If the T. S. can hold through it, good; if not, while Theosophy will remain unscathed, the Society will perish —perchance most ingloriously—and the World will suffer. I fervently hope that I may not see such a disaster in my present body."

XII. From H. P. B.'s posthumous work, "The Theosophical Glossary," published in 1892, p. 170.

" The fourth, the *black* or iron age, [is] our present period, the duration of which is 432,000 years. The last of the ages into which the evolutionary period of man is divided by a series of such ages. It [the last one] began 3102 years B.C. at the moment of Krishna's death, and the first cycle of 5,000 years will end between the years 1897 and 1898."

Asuramaya

We have already heard from where H. P. B. obtained her knowledge regarding the different cycles of cosmic and human evolution *in general*—from that " very old book, from which the many volumes of *Kiu-ti* were compiled." The question is now where her knowledge of the Kali Yuga cycle *in particular* was derived from. The passage, part of which is quoted above, sub V, gives the answer. From a Tamil calendar, the *Tirukkanda Panchanga* for *Kali Yuga* 4986 (1884-85) " compiled by two very learned Brahmins, Chintamany Raghanaracharya, son of the famous Government astronomer of Madras, and Tartakamala Venkata Krishna Rao."[1] It was compiled " from fragments of immensely old works attributed to the Atlantean astronomer, Asuramaya, and found in Southern India," H. P. B. informs us, adding further: " The work is proclaimed

[1] The Adyar Library is not in possession of a copy, and I have not yet been able to secure one. If anybody is the fortunate possessor of, or can lay his hand on, a copy, it would be greatly appreciated if he would make the Adyar Library the happy recipient of it.

by the best Pandits as faultless—from the Brahmanical standpoint—and thus far relates to the chronology of the orthodox teachings. If we compare its statements with those made several years earlier in 'Isis Unveiled,' with the fragmentary teachings published by the same Theosophists, and with the present data derived from the Secret Books of Occultism [*Kiu-Ti*], *the whole will be found to agree perfectly, save in some details which may not be explained*;[1] for secrets of higher Initiation —as unknown to the writer as they are to the reader —would have to be revealed, and that *cannot be done.*"[2]

The Death-blow to Materialism

In my older article I have given diverse illustrations of the truly critical nature of the closing years of the last century. Among these is the death-blow given to materialistic science (see above, sub IV) round about the year 1897, as testified to by men of science themselves. For example, Mr. Dampier-Whetham tells us: "From 1895 onwards, there came *the new revelation in physics.* The new physics may be said to have begun in 1895 with the discovery of X-rays by Prof. Wilhelm Konrad Röntgen of Munich. Röntgen's discovery led to another field of research, that of radio-activity. In this search, the first success fell to Henri Becquerel,

[1] My italics.

[2] *SD*[1], II, 51; *SD*[4], III, 67.

who in February 1896 found that uranium and all its compounds emit rays. The next year, 1897, was marked by the great discovery of ultra-atomic corpuscles. The new era in physics had begun. *The old materialism is dead.*" [1]

So much for physical science. To this I may now add the not less striking case of the science of psychology. It is " Psycho-Analysis " which has caused the greatest revolution in this field, and we are told that " the beginnings of psycho-analysis are marked by two dates : 1895 which saw the publication of Breuer and Freud's *Studien über Hysterie*, and 1900 which saw that of Freud's *Traumdeutung*." [2]

Was there ever a greater and truer prophetess than H. P. B. when she wrote that " between this [her] time [1888] and 1897 materialistic science will receive a death-blow " ?

Universal Brotherhood

The above texts from H. P. B.'s works show an increasing emphasis and a growing anxiety, as their author felt her last days close in upon her. The approaching end of Kali Yuga's first sub-cycle was more than an interesting theoretical or even hypothetical proposition. For her it was a real thing. She saw it coming with all its immediate implications. The critical moment was drawing fearfully

[1] *History of Science*, Cambridge University Press, 1930, p. 470.

[2] *Enc. Britt.*, vol. 18, p. 674.

near. Critical not only for the future spiritual state of humanity in general, but also and specially for her particular life-work—Theosophy and The Theosophical Society. Under the stress of the last efforts she even became more pessimistic than is warrantable. Her forecast that after the fatal hour, 1897-98, no Eastern Adept or even a pupil of one would anymore visit the West until the New Dispensation in 1975 seems too dark a vision.

As to the possibility of the failure of The Theosophical Society and its "perishing ingloriously," she herself has given us the magic formula to prevent such a disaster, namely to be true to "the beautiful dream of a *Universal Brotherhood of Man*," with the stress laid on the "Universal."

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